

The Christian a New Creature:

Being the SUBSTANCE of a

DISCOURSE

OF

Monf. SUPERVILLE,

Deliver'd on a

New - Year's - Day.

WITH A

PREFACE to the READER

CONCERNING

REGENERATION.

This Subject is very important, and always seasonable, and ought to be thoroughly meditated by People of all Persuasions and Parties; that thereby they may judge what Advance they have made in true Christianity, or what they chiefly ought to labour after, under all external Performances in Religion.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. RIVINGTON in St. Paul's Church-Yard. MDCCLXXXIX.

[Price Six-Pence.]

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P R E F A C E

T O T H E

R E A D E R.

*T*HE following Discourse being out of Print, some serious Persons have wished to see it republished for the Benefit of others. The Subject is indeed of the greatest Importance, being no less than the very Essence of Christianity. It is the Doctrine of the spiritual Life, and of that wonderful Change, which is wrought in the Heart of Man, in consequence of Regeneration, thro' a lively Faith in Christ, and the Operation of the Holy Ghost. But altho' this blessed Change, here called the New Creation, is felt by every sincere Believer, 'tis so mysterious, and above the Comprehension of natural Understanding, that few are capable of defining, or even making it intelligible to others. The wiser Part of Mankind in all Ages, even Heathens and Jews, as well as Christians, seem to have had some Notion of it. Philosophy saw the Necessity, and
A
admired

admired the Beauty of this interior Change, some calling it Illumination, some Justice, some the boniform or luciform Faculty of the Soul; some styling it a sixth Sense, some an inward Sensation. Revelation, in the Old Testament, calls it more truly, a New Spirit, a Right Spirit, a New Heart, Another Heart, the Circumcision of the Heart, a Heart of Flesh, Quickening, &c. This, I say, comes nearer the Truth; because it presupposes original Sin, and the Fall of Man from that State of Righteousness wherein he was created; and has an Eye to that spiritual Death and Corruption, consequent to our Fall, from whence we must be revived, and raised again to a Reunion with our Maker.*

But the Gospel gives us the clearest and only right Idea of the spiritual Life, and of that Immortality which is brought to Light thro' the Gospel. But still, as it is above Nature, no Words in Nature can fully and adequately express it. Therefore, even in the New Testament, divers Metaphors are made use of by the inspired Writers to represent it to us. It is there described by various Names, according to its Nature and Properties, its Causes and Effects, its Kinds and Degrees. But for Brevity's sake, I shall barely name them, and refer the Reader to the several Texts pointed to; wishing that some abler Hand would, from these rude Out-lines, draw out a just Description of

the spiritual Life, according to its full Dimensions, and most beautiful Symmetry of Parts.

As to its Nature, it is called Life, John i. iv. ch. v. 24. 1 John v. 12. Eternal Life, John vi. 53, 54. The Life of God, Eph. iv. 18. Our Life hid with Christ in God, Col. iii. 3. The Law of the Spirit of Life, Rom. viii. 2. Newness of Life, Rom. vi. 4.

*As to its Cause; it is called, The SPIRIT, Rom. viii. 9, 10, 13. in an absolute Sense, as it is derived from the Holy Spirit, who is the [Ζωοποιον, * or] immediate Cause, and Giver of the spiritual Life. It is called Living in the Spirit, Gal. v. 25. Walking after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1. Being led by the Spirit, Gal. v. 18. The Spirit of Faith, 2 Cor. iv. 13. Fellowship of the Spirit, Phil. ii. 1. And Communion of the Holy Ghost, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Newness of Spirit, Rom. vii. 6.*

As to its Properties and Effects, it is called LIGHT, John i. 4, &c. Illumination, Heb. x. 32. And Enlightening, Chap. vi. 4. The New Creation, New Creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. New Man, Eph. ii. 15. Chap. iv. 24. The First Resurrection, Rev. xx. 5, 6. compared with Col. iii. 1. Rom. vi. 4, 5. Eph. ii. 6. Chap. v. 14. Adoption, Rom. viii. 15, 23. Renovation, the Renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit. iii. 5. Being renewed in the Spirit of our Mind, Eph. iv. 23. Quickening, Col. ii. 13.

* Nicene Creed.

It is called the Way; the Way of God, Acts xviii. 26. The Way of Peace, Rom. iii. 17. of Righteousness, 2 Pet. ii. 21. of Salvation, Acts xvi. 17. The seeing of God, Matt. v. 8. Tasting how gracious the Lord is, 1 Pet. ii. 3. Tasting the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, Heb. vi. 5. Tasting of the heavenly Gift, ver. 4. Savouring the Things that be of God, Matt. xvi. 23. Joy and Peace in believing, Rom. xv. 13.

The Kinds and Degrees are distinguished by the several Acts of the three divine Virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, and are respectively called :

1. FAITH ; The Just shall live by Faith, Heb. x. 38. *And according to the Degrees of that Life, Faith is great or small, strong or weak : If some have a full Assurance of Faith, others are of little Faith : Hence Faith is said to grow, 2 Thess. i. 3. and increase, 2 Cor. x. 15. and the Measure of Faith ever holds Proportion with the Measure of the spiritual Life.*
2. *It is called HOPE ; a Lively Hope, 1 Pet. i. 3. Rejoicing in Hope, Rom. xii. 12. The Rejoicing of the Hope, Heb. iii. 6. The full Assurance of Hope, Chap. vi. 11.*
3. LOVE ; Faith working by Love, Gal. v. 6. Perfect Love, 1 John iv. 18. Love of God shed

shed abroad in the Heart, *Rom. v. 5.* Love
unfeigned, *2 Cor. vi. 6.*

Finally, *It is called Perfection, Heb. vi. 1.*
Righteousness and true Holiness, *Eph. iv. 24.*
Sanctification of the Spirit, *2 Thess. ii. 13.*
That Holiness, without which no Man shall
see the Lord, *Heb. xii. 14.*

*These are the several Parts, these the Mem-
bers, which, taken together, constitute the New
Creature, the new Man in Christ. To under-
stand this more plainly, we are to consider, that
by Nature we are all Children of Wrath, born
under that Sentence of Death, which passed upon
our first Parent Adam, and in Him, on us all;
subject therefore to Condemnation, and alienated
from the Life of God. By Grace we pass
from Death unto Life; are raised again from
the Dead, quickened and restored to that Life
we lost in Adam; for, as in Adam all died,
so all in Christ are made alive. The merito-
rious Cause of our new Life is the Death of
Christ, pursuant to the Condition and Promise
of the new Covenant. The efficient Cause is the
Holy Ghost, from whom, as from its immediate
Principle, this new Life is called the SPIRITUAL
LIFE. It is begotten of God, as Jesus Christ
was; conceived of the Holy Ghost in the Womb
of the Church, as he was of the Virgin Mary;
and so born, as he was, a second Time. Hence
it is, that this second Birth of the Christian,
which is effected in Baptism, is called Rege-
neration;*

neration; and Baptism itself is styled the Laver of Regeneration. Hence, by being born again, as he was, shall we be indeed conformed to the Image of Christ.

This then is the proper Sense of Regeneration, this the Order it holds in the spiritual Life. It is but the first Entrance into the spiritual State, as our coming forth from our Mother's Womb was our first Step into the Life of Nature. It cannot then, with any Propriety, signify either the spiritual Life itself, or its Effects and Operations. It is the Medium only, by which it is produced; and is so extraordinary a Medium, in its Effects, as to be called also a new Creation. Nor is this peculiar to adult Persons; even Infants, when baptized, are said to be regenerate. So our Liturgy, "Seeing this Child is regenerate, and grafted into the Body of the Church, &c." And in this Sense, both the Scriptures, and the Primitive Writers, constantly use the Word, and always mean it of the new Birth in BAPTISM.

But modern Divines, since the Reformation, and especially Calvin and his Followers, have introduced into their Divinity a new Sense of the Word, resolving the whole Spirit and Substance of true Christianity into the Word Regeneration; making that, which is but a Part, to be the Whole; and confounding the full Growth, or what St. Paul calls, the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ, and the perfect Manhood of the Christian, with
his

his Birth and Infancy, which is no small Solecism in Speech, as well as Divinity.

It might also be shewn, what unhappy Effects such an Innovation in the Terms of Christian Doctrine hath produced. It carries, indeed, a plausible Appearance of uncommon Sanctity and Zeal, to barangue on Topicks of exalted Piety: But if the Discourse be contrary to sound Doctrine, 1 Tim. i. 10. it betrays the serious, but unlearned Hearers, into wrong Notions concerning a vital Principle, yea the very Life of Christianity. The Consequence must be fatal to those who are misled thereby; and I fear, has proved the sad Occasion of weakening Mens Regard to the Means of Grace, and the Judgment and Orders of the Church. There was a Time, when the Words Regenerate and Unregenerate, were no longer used and understood in the Orthodox Sense of the Church, to signify Persons Baptized or Unbaptized, but to signify Good or Bad Men. Children were no longer considered as the proper Subjects of Regeneration, nor the Sacrament of Baptism, and its legal Administrators, included in the Definition. By this means, and the loud and contentious Clamours about who were, or who were not Regenerate, the true Christian Regeneration was stripp'd of its genuine Import and Signification, became a mere Bone of Contention, and our Church was quarrell'd at for applying it to Infants. May we not apply to this, that Saying of the Prophet Hosea, He is an un-
wife

wise Son; for he should not stay long in the Place of the breaking forth of Children, *Hof. xiii. 13.* Regeneration is the Place of the breaking forth of Children to God, and should therefore be treated only with respect to Baptism and its salutary Effects, but not continually or too long be dwelt upon. The other Parts of the spiritual Life, above enumerated, are of more general Importance to be explained and recommended to a Christian Audience, a Congregation of Persons already Regenerate and Baptized, according to St. Paul's Advice, *Heb. vi. 1, 2.*

To shew I am not singular in my Judgment concerning the modern Abuse of the Word, I desire to refer the Reader, for Brevity's sake, to a Note of Dr. Nichols, on the Word Regenerate in the Office of Baptism; where he proves that the modern is not the genuine primitive Sense of the Word, but is a Calvinistical Innovation. But Dean Stanhope has given us so clear an Idea of what the Church means by Regeneration and the New Birth, and the Use we ought to make of that Knowledge, that for the Usefulness of the Doctrine, as well as my own Justification, I cannot forbear transcribing the following Passages from him.

“ The Spiritual and Natural Life agree in
 “ this, that as we can be born but once, so we
 “ are baptized but once. And as the vital Prin-
 “ ciple, in each Case, is then imparted for a
 “ Man's whole Term, so it is, in each Case, left
 “ to a Man's own Care to preserve and cherish
 “ it.

" it. There may indeed be many Languishings
 " and Indispositions; there may be also violent
 " and acute Diseases in the Body, from which
 " Recovery is had, and Health perfectly restored.
 " There may too in the Soul be great Slacken-
 " ings of Zeal, Wastings and Failings, Falls by
 " Infirmities or Surprise, nay grievous deliberate
 " Offences and corrupt Customs. And yet these,
 " if taken in Time, may be cured by the spiri-
 " tual Food and Physick provided for that Pur-
 " pose; Consideration and Prayer, and Repen-
 " tance, the Word of God, and the Sacrament
 " of his Death; these are our Refreshments and
 " our Remedies. They sustain us when we
 " droop, they restore us when we are sick, they
 " enable us to grow, and strengthen us when at
 " our Stature. And therefore, it is as much
 " as the Life I am speaking of is worth, for
 " every Man to apply these frequently, sea-
 " sonably, and reverently. For, by neglecting
 " these Ordinances, ill Habits get Ground, and
 " a Redundance of noxious Humours will choke
 " our vital Principle, and throw us back again
 " into that Death, from which there is no
 " Birth or Resurrection to rescue us *. Ep.
 " & G. Vol. III. p. 265.

" 'Tis called in Scripture a New Heart, a
 " New Spirit, a New Man, and a New Crea-
 " ture, a New Birth, a New Life. By which
 " must be meant a Newness of Notions, Dis-

* From which it follows, that Regeneration is no in-
 defectible State, as some erroneously imagine.

“ positions, and Desires, and of a Conversation
 “ proceeding from, and agreeable to these;
 “ which are very properly styled New, because
 “ succeeding that vicious and corrupt State, in
 “ which by Nature we are born.

“ This Change is made by the Grace of God’s
 “ Holy Spirit, which gives a fresh Turn to our
 “ Thoughts and Affections, imprints a true Sense
 “ of Good and Evil, puts a quite different Bent
 “ upon the Will, disposes us to walk by Faith,
 “ rather than by Sight, to prefer pure and intel-
 “ lectual, before sensual and polluted Pleasures.
 “ Ibid. p. 264.

This is the Subject, and this the Design, of
 the ensuing Discourse; and as such is humbly
 recommended to the Perusal and Practice of
 all serious Persons, who desire to go on to Per-
 fection, and have a holy Ambition to be Christi-
 ans in Deed, as well as in Name; in a Word,
 to be NEW CREATURES.

2 COR. v. *part of the 17th Ver.*

*If any Man be in Christ, he is a
new Creature.*

I KNOW not of any Discourse or Subject, that may more naturally follow the Doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ, than that of our Regeneration; that as he, out of an amazing Love and Condescension, took our Nature upon him; so we should look upon it as our highest Privilege to be born again, and endeavour it as our indispensable Duty, to be transform'd into his Nature. In the Mystery of his Nativity, we have seen the sure Foundation of this Privilege, and of this Duty: How God came down and was manifested to us in Christ; how the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, that he might set us an Example of all Virtue; and having undergone all those Sufferings which were ap-

pointed him ; having ascended up into Heaven, and entered into that Glory which he had with the Father before the World was, he delegated the Holy Spirit to advance and finish that spiritual Building, the Foundation of which he laid in his own Blood. The great Design of all the mysterious Transactions which we read of in the Scriptures, is indeed our Edification, or the Building us up, in Christ ; it is to make us Partakers of the divine Nature ; in a Word, to make us New Creatures, according to the Words of the Apostle, *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature.* From which Words I shall endeavour to shew these three Things :

I. What we are to understand by *being in Christ.*

II. What is meant by *a new Creature.*

III. The necessary Connexion between these, viz. *That if any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature.*

I. What we are to understand by *being in Christ.*

I. The being *in Christ* signifies in General, the being a Christian, our being made Members of him in Baptism, and professing the Christian Religion : So St. Paul salutes the
Saints

Saints which *are in Christ Jesus*; that is, the Christian Professors of such and such a Church. *In Christ Jesus*, (that is, in the Christian Religion) *neither Circumcision avail-eth any thing, nor Uncircumcision*. On the contrary, to be out of Christ, signifies the State of Infidels, Pagans, Jews, and all those who have no Part in the Covenant, the Promises and Benefits of the Gospel. So that by an external visible Profession, People may be said to be *in Christ*, in the lowest Sense of that Expression, tho' they be Hypocrites and perfect Strangers to the Life and Spirit of the Christian Religion; yet having been baptized in the Faith of Christ, and being enrolled as Members of his Church, and making Profession of living in Conformity to the Laws of that spiritual Kingdom, they are to be reckoned by us, as *being in Christ*. We must judge as candidly and favourably as we can of those, whose Hearts and real Intentions are not known to us. But,

2. To be *in Christ*, does signify the being Christians in Heart and Life, as well as in Appearance and outward Profession; it signifies our being united to him by a real, internal and vital Union, as Members are in the Body, which live by the same Soul; as flourishing Branches in the Vine, which are animated and nourished by the same Sap, and vegetative Nature. For to all true Believers, Christ is the mystical Head, from whence they
derive

derive divine Life and Sensation, Holiness and Immortality. In the Order of common Nature, all are united to God as our Creator; are in a continual Dependence upon him. *In him we live, and move, and have our Being*; from him we received our first Existence, and subsist every Moment by his Preservation of us. But this Union to God is such as all Mankind have, it respecting only natural Life, and the Continuance of it. In the Order of Grace, there is another Union; which is our being in God as our Redeemer and Sanctifier; and this is effected by our being in Christ as the Root and Principle of a new Life, consisting of Grace and Holiness. This Union, upon the Account of our fallen State, is immediately with our Mediator, and thro' him, with the Father. It begins by the Sacrament of Baptism; it is carried on by a Conformity to his Image, or a Likeness of Temper and Disposition; when we are meek and humble, pure and charitable, patient and resigned, as our Saviour was; when we copy after the original Holiness of God, exhibited to us in the Life of Christ, and made practicable to us by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost: From this there arises a mutual and reciprocal Union, which on our Parts is made by an habitual Faith, Obedience and Love; and on Christ's Part, it is made by that Love which he has for us, and by the Habitation of

of the Holy Spirit within us; which transforms us into the same Image, and consecrates us into an Holy Temple of God, a spiritual Building designed for all Eternity.

II. What is meant by *a new Creature*.

Now this is a figurative Expression, and denotes a moral, not a physical Change; not a Change in the Essence and Substance of our Nature, but in the Qualities of it. When a Sinner becomes righteous; an Infidel, a true Believer; a sensual Person, a sober, temperate, and religious Christian; the Substance of the Soul, or its Faculties, are not supposed to be new created; but only the Soul has changed her Habits and Qualities, her Inclinations, Purposes and Designs. To be capable of Knowing, Thinking, and Willing, is the rational Nature which all have in common as Men; but the new Nature, which is wrought upon this, is to know God in Christ; to think and meditate upon heavenly Things with Pleasure; and to will and desire as God would have us, and according to those Laws and Precepts he has given us in Christ. In receiving of the new Nature we lose nothing of the old, but the Malignity and Corruption of it; instead of Ignorance, we have a divine Knowledge; in the Room of Iniquity, we have Sanctity of Heart; and the Love of the Creatures gives Place

Place to the Love of God : We have Thoughts, Desires, Affections, Habits, much better, more elevated, more holy than we had before. And this Change is sometimes called Conversion and Sanctification, Resurrection to Newness of Life, the new Man, *a new Creature*.

The regenerate Person is called *a new Creature*, in opposition to Sin and the old Man. Natural Corruption being, after some time, left to itself in the *Gentile* World, had grown to a prodigious Height in Wickedness : By Sensuality, Superstition and Idolatry, a great Part of the World was come under the Empire and Tyranny of the Devil ; the irregular Appetites and Desires, the animal Passions and evil Habits, had made up a Body of Sin, consisting of several Members and Branches ; and this is that, which is more or less in every Man by Nature : This is that which our Saviour came to destroy : And he does it by putting a new Principle into our Natures, that will diffuse itself, if not resisted, into all our Inclinations and Affections ; and give them a new Byass, new Objects, new Ends and Designs. By his Word, he enlightens our Minds with a new Set of Doctrines ; by the Motives of the Gospel, he puts a new Spring and Force into our Souls ; by the holy Exercises he appoints, he gives us new Tastes and Relishes of divine Things ; and by the Participation of his Holy Spirit, makes

makes us conscious of other Hopes and Joys, than this World can afford us.

This new Creature is such a Change as can be effected only by a divine Power; such as created the World, and raised up Christ from the Dead: But though it be the same Power, it does not follow, that it should be after the same Manner, *i. e.* by an irresistible immediate Act of Omnipotence; for this would be carrying a Metaphor too far, the Building of Doctrines, not upon the true Sense of Scripture, but upon the Imaginations of Men. Conversion is not made without Means and Motives, without the Word of God, and the Use of Exhortations; neither is it ordinarily effected in an Instant, but 'tis a Business of Time and Leisure, of Conflict, and Labour, and Application. In this Creation there is a Subject that perceives the Work of God upon it, nay, that co-operates with it; for God cannot be properly said to aid and assist those who do nothing themselves.

Our Faith, and our Sanctification, or new Nature, are in the Scriptures attributed to several Causes: To the holy Spirit of God, as the principal Author and Efficient; to the Word of God, [and divine Exhortations, as the subordinate Means; to the Ministers of God, as the Instruments of Mens Conversion, by laying before them the Reasons and Motives to Faith and Repentance; and sometimes 'tis ascribed to Man himself, as con-

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curring

cunning to the same spiritual Work, as being made willing by divine Grace, and persuaded by the Promises of the Gospel, and acting under the Influences of the Holy Spirit. And when all these Causes are subordinate to the Spirit of God, the whole Glory of the Action may well be attributed to the principal efficient Cause: So that every converted Person may say with *St. Paul*, *Not I, but the Grace of God that is in me*; for though Man himself does act something in this new Creation, yet his Part is so mean and so low, and so depending on the powerful Grace of God; that he ought, in all Truth and Humility, to ascribe the whole Glory to the Divine Spirit.

I have one Reflection more to make upon this Expression of *a new Creature*; which is, the Greatness of this Change; for though we must not follow the Metaphor so far as to run into any Absurdities, yet we must carry it to a just Height in its true Sense and Meaning; 'tis not therefore an ordinary Change in the Heart and Affections, in the Mind and Temper, and in the Lives and Actions of Men, that is here signified by *a new Creature*: There was no need of using such noble Ideas, or of employing so mighty a Power, if something very great and extraordinary were not here intended. The Sanctions of Law-givers, and the moral Precepts of Philosophers, wrought some Change
in

in Men for the better; gave them at least an external Decency in their Actions, and a sober Regularity in their Lives, and a Splendour in some of their political Virtues: But the New Creature goes deeper than all this; here there must be a new Heart created, a new Spirit infused: There must be Ends, and Views, and Motives, above the Order and Scene of this World. The Life which is conducted only by *human* Motives, is still *the old Man*, tho' beautified, and adorned, and covered over with a handsome Disguise. In *the new Creature* there is a predominant Love of God, which is the Principle of all our Actions; there is a Preference of Christ, and his Laws, before all the Interests of this World; there is a general Renouncing of all Vice, a fixed and permanent Resolution to follow after all Holiness, both in its Extent, and in its Perfection: And tho' *the new Creature* be not consummated in all its Parts and Excellencies in this Life; yet the new Principle is so strong, that it is working off Imperfections more and more; and still adding fresher and livelier Touches to the Image of Christ in us, till it comes to be finished into Glory.

III. The third Thing proposed, was to shew the necessary Connexion, that there is between the *being in Christ*, and the *new Creature*.

If *any one be in Christ*, let him be a *new Creature* (so some render the Text); for otherwise, he will have no Benefit by his Religion. Although in some Sense he may be said to *be in Christ*, upon the Account of his mere Profession, or his visible Appearance in Christian Assemblies; yet 'tis only as a rotten Branch may be said to be in the Vine, which, when the Vine-dresser prunes, will be certainly cut off, and be as Fuel for the Fire.

He who is *in Christ* by a real and internal Union, must at the same time be look'd upon as a new Creature; his Renovation is begun, and he must take care to carry it on in a Progress to Perfection. We are said to be regenerated when we are baptized, but this Regeneration is sacramental; and though in that respect it answers to all the Purposes of a federal and initial Sanctification, even as to the Condition of Infants, by giving them a new Birth, and entitling them to all the Privileges of the Gospel; yet when they come to Years of Discretion, their Baptism will not serve without a moral and spiritual Change; unless their Hearts be renewed by the Holy Spirit,
and

and their Lives be led according to the Example of Christ. Do not think that your Regeneration in Baptism is sufficient. The spiritual Life is but begun there; you are then *in Christ* as a Member is in the Body; you have then a Right to the Spirit of Christ; in some Degree you partake thereof: but then afterwards you must apply to God in Prayer, in the Office of Confirmation, and the worthy receiving the Lord's Supper, for further Measures of that Holy Spirit, as your Condition shall require; and you must be all your Days perfecting of that Image of Christ upon your Souls. The saving Union to Christ must be in Principles, Resolutions and Tempers, in an operative Faith and Obedience, as well as by Sacramental Blessing and Efficacy; we must be holy, not only in the Dedication of our Persons to Christ, but in the renewing of our Natures and Minds, in our Love and Relish of heavenly Things, and in the whole Course of our Conversation. In this Sense we must be *new Creatures*, if we would answer the Design of our Saviour's Incarnation, or his coming into the World. It was not to give us new Titles and new Names; it was not to open a Sanctuary to the Ungodly, who remain such, and cheat themselves with presuming on Privileges which were never prepared for them; but to transform us into the same Spirit and Temper

per with himself, to make a great and real Change in all the Faculties of our Souls, and to build us up into an holy Temple worthy the Inhabitation of his blessed Spirit.— Where (derived from this Giver of Life *) the spiritual Life is, there will be spiritual Appetites, an Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness: And here the Doctrines, and Precepts, and Virtues of Christ's Example, received by Faith, digested by Meditation, and vitally transfus'd into all the Soul by Prayer and Devotion, will be the proper Nourishment for such regenerated Natures: Their certain and solid Experiences will continually excite in them such strong and ardent Desires after more Degrees of Goodness; such habitual Delight in holy Exercises; such Growth and Strength in the inner Man, tho' the outward daily decay and perish; that they will find themselves, in many respects, to be quite other Creatures, either from what they once were, or from what the generality of the World usually is. This will fill them with most lively Hopes as to the Promises of the other World, and make them sensibly perceive the Principles and Evidences of a glorious Immortality within themselves: The renewed Mind and sanctified Understanding will readily receive all the Mysteries of the Christian Religion,

* Τὸ Πνεῦμα Ζωοποιόν.

and

and heartily comply with all its gracious Designs, adore the venerable Truth, and find the great Reality of what the Gospel has discover'd and promised, by what has been already transacted in their own Souls.

This new Creation is a State that equally consists with all the various Dispensations of this Life; it enables us patiently to undergo the Troubles we cannot innocently and prudently avoid; it helps us to a continual good Use of all the Blessings of Providence, according to our best Discretion, and the Influence of that sovereign Principle, the Love of God, by which we are acted, and by which all our reasonable Actions become true Christian Virtues; yea, it gives a pious Tendency to the most indifferent Actions of human Life.

This is that secret Principle that puts in Motion our regular Self-Government, our faithful Discharge of relative Duties, and our constant Obedience to all publick Order that is lawfully established either in the Church, or in the State; that regulates our private Conversation, our honest Recreations, our natural Refreshments, our several Studies and Employments, and our whole Course of Actions in the present World. As to the different States of high or low, rich or poor, healthy or sickly, lov'd or despis'd; these are Scenes that soon pass away: But the glorious Life to which we are new-created,
which

which is now hid with Christ in God, and which shall most eminently appear, when Christ shall come to be glorified in all his Saints, shall always last, and never be clouded more.

Let no interior Christian be offended, that he finds so much of Religion in an outward Dress, with such a Mixture of Ceremonies and human Prudencies, as make it seem a little too worldly, even in the best reformed Churches. A national Religion must necessarily make use of some Additions, of which there is nothing said in the Holy Scriptures; but then they must be such as are proper to preserve, and excite, and cherish the New Creature; and in some Cases to enforce an external Obedience, especially in such Persons as are unreasonably turbulent and refractory, and have no inward Law to govern and direct themselves; but of all these external Matters in Religion, publick Wisdom must be Judge, and not Scrupulosity and Enthusiasm.

And tho' there be Numbers of worldly and formal Professors of Christianity, who will never get to Heaven by a mere national Religion, because whatever is rewardable by a righteous and holy God, must be inward, voluntary, and sincere; yet a national Religion may well be look'd upon as a general Calling of People to the Gospel, who are afterwards to be work'd into
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into true Converts, and into such New Creatures as Christianity designs, by the most spiritual Means and Counsels that can be used and given. In a Word, a national Religion is an outward Dispensation, under which the Holy Spirit is continually gathering his Elect; that is, such as have Sincerity and Humility enough to be saved.

To conclude, this *new Creature*, is that spiritual and heavenly Temper, which God chiefly intended by the several Revelations he made to the antient Patriarchs: This was the principal Design that lay at the Bottom of the Law and the Prophets; and this runs thro' all the Articles and Mysteries of the Gospel, and at the Conclusion of the mediatorial Kingdom of Christ, after the great Day of Judgment is over, you will then find, that none but such as I have described, according to their various Degrees, will enter into that Glory which our Saviour has prepared for all his true Disciples; that none but the *new Creatures* will be able to sing the *new Song* in Heaven.

This World was therefore created of God, and afterwards redeemed, that out of it he might raise such a Church at last, as should glorify him to all Eternity. And when this new-created Habitation of the divine Presence shall be consummated, then all the Variety of subservient Dispensations and Providences shall cease, as Scaffolds are taken
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down when the Building is finished; and this spiritual Temple, this Building of God shall wholly appear in its perfect Beauty; where there will be sung to all Eternity by Angels and Saints, one uniform Liturgy, of *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

Believe it, Christian, 'tis this *new Creature*, as here describ'd, this holy Disposition or divine Life alone, that, through the Merits of Christ, can make you Partaker of that peculiar Glory, which he has purchased for his Disciples: All other Ways are mere Pretences and Mockeries of the Gospel, and will deceive you at the last; they are either Superstition or Hypocrisy, cold Formality, or Deism, or moral Philosophy, or political Virtue, and outward Decency of Life, or such human Inventions and Indulgences to corrupt Nature, as are so many Stratagems, Devices and Plots against real Righteousness; whereas true Piety is the Fear and Love of God deeply rooted in the Heart, superior to all other Passions, above all worldly Designs and Actions, continually exercised in all good Virtues, and christian Duties, and persevering through all Trials and Difficulties; striving and overcoming, and looking forwards, and stretching towards the Mark, till it receives the Crown of Glory,

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